

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

School Committee

OF THE

Town of Franklin,

FOR THE

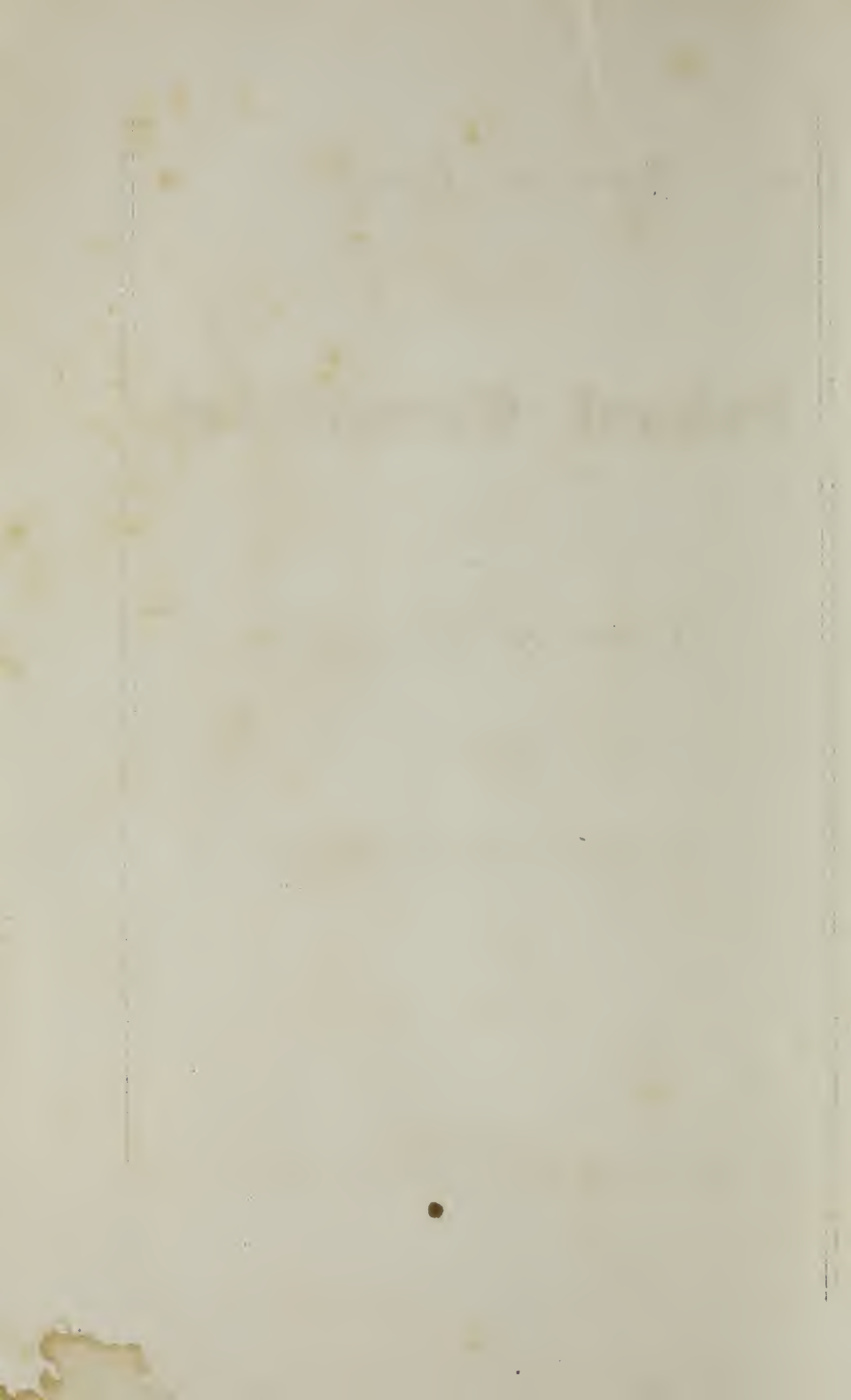
SCHOOL YEAR, 1874-75.



FRANKLIN:

REGISTER OFFICE PRINT, STEWART'S BLOCK.

1875.



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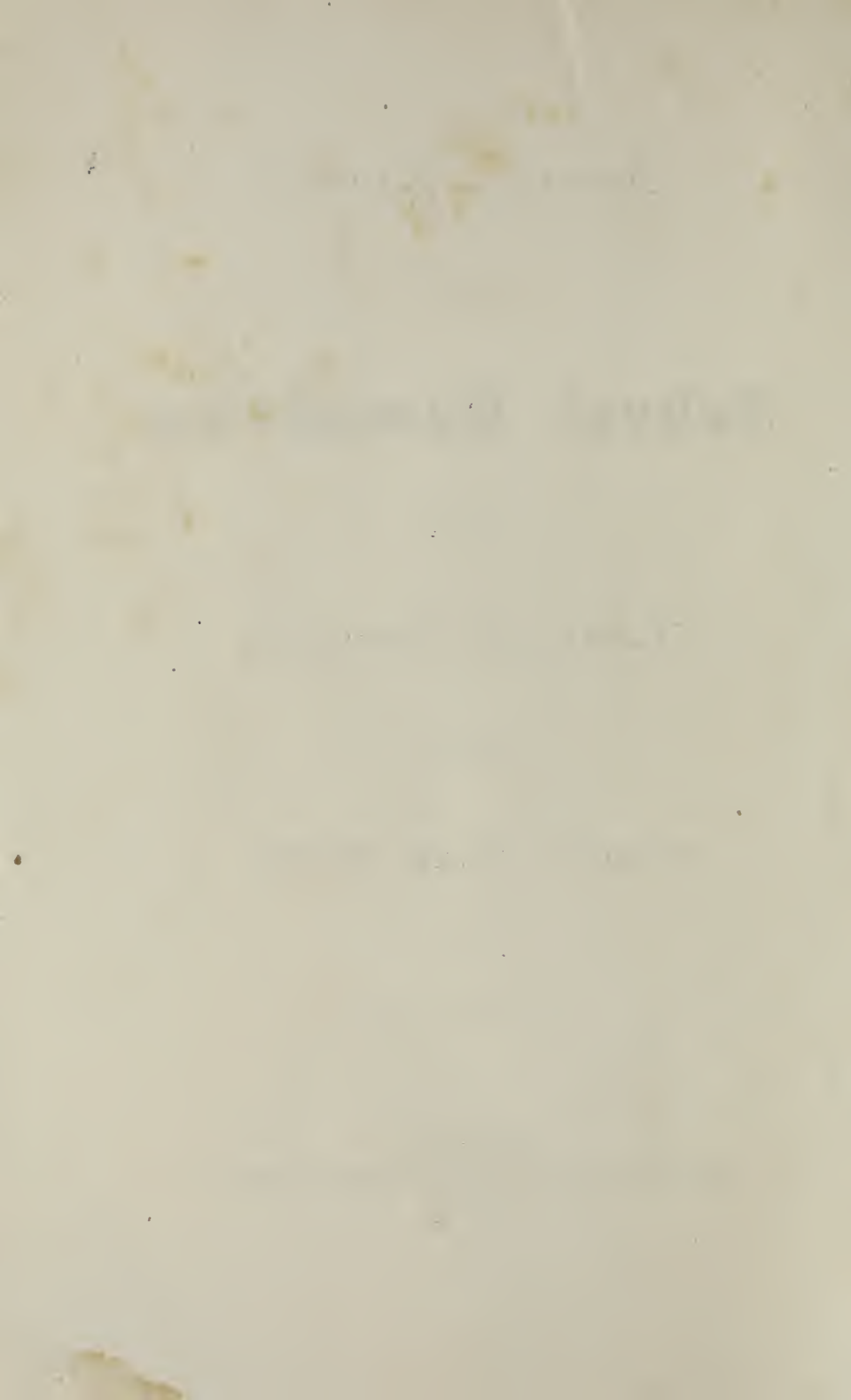
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REPORT.

YOUR COMMITTEE PRESENT THE FOLLOWING REPORT :

The constant increase of scholars in the village has led to the necessity of establishing a new school therein. In the location of the new school differences of opinion existed, not only in the minds of the Committee, but also among the patrons of the school, as to the most desirable location of the house. We think the location selected as nearly central as any one that could be obtained,—that it accommodates and satisfies the great majority of its patrons as well, if not better, than any other site which we could command. We also feel to congratulate the town from the fact that no village in the Commonwealth, no larger than ours, has school facilities equal to ours, we being the judges. Nor do we feel inclined, in our congratulations, to confine ourselves to the village. As a town you would not suffer in a comparison with sister towns. Your school houses are all inviting in their interior if not in their outer structure. You have spent money and time in making the school home of your children comfortable and inviting. No low or narrow spirit has bounded your vision or aims in this direction the last ten years. Nor have you been remiss in raising funds for the purpose of securing to your children proper instruction during these years of constant taxation. But may we not ask, (with

some apprehension that all is not as it should have been,) have you been as careful in all the duties and details of school life, as it exists between parents and children as in the former respects. Have you thought that a good school house and good teacher are not all that is necessary to maintain a good and profitable school? Not all that is required for the thorough and permanent prosperity of your children? How can you ever hope for commendable progress without constant attention to the advantages you possess? Of what avail is the school if your children do not improve it? We do not mean three or four days in the week, but every day and every hour. It is not pleasant to be fault-finding; but if there is any one point on which line upon line and precept upon precept is needed it is this. We feel that you are not in earnest in this matter. How can we think otherwise? It is true you raise six thousand dollars for schooling, make a show of zeal and earnestness, but what do you do with it? Nearly one-third of it is wasted by and through the inattention of yourselves and children to the table of your own furnishing. The merest excuse is oftentimes sufficient to secure the tardiness or absence of your scholar.—Much less are you ready to make sacrifices, that every possibility may be improved. Does the opportunity present itself, how readily do some of us let our children leave school to earn a few dollars, and flatter ourselves that this is our business—a matter in which others have no concern. This is not true, however. Every scholar in the school has an interest in it. Every citizen in town has a marked interest in it, saying nothing of the state and nation. We might say, in all safety, the world at large has an interest, or feels more or less its influence. When we were called upon to furnish our mite to the World's Exhibi-

tion, held in Vienna a few years since, by furnishing our school report for its inspection, the one dark feature was the average attendance for the whole number of scholars. It could but cause a blush, to show the world our remissness in this direction. A tinge of shame, when we reflected that the same report went in to make up the aggregate of the average attendance of all the schools, in the State Report. The question now arises—What did we get in return for this individual, town and state loss? In answer, we must say, if we come down to money basis, we did not receive nearly as much as we lost; that is, take every dollar earned in the cranberry meadows and factories by children between the ages of five and fifteen years, during the school term, and it will not make up the loss occurring from non-attendance at school. Yes, take every trifle earned by these scholars in all directions, and then make due allowance for sickness and unavoidable absences, and then the money balance would be against the gains received in this direction.—But this is not the worst feature in the case. It may be true that the love of money is the root of all evil; still the loss of it is not the greatest evil that can befall parents and children in their joint labors, losses, crosses and triumphs in the struggle for true scholarship. The loss of time and place is beyond compare, because it has a twofold significance, especially when matters of minor importance cause the result. The loss is mental, and the error is a moral wrong, because the absentee not only loses his time and proper place in his class, but he throws a shadow or stumbling block in the way of his associates. He must either go down into a lower class, or else he must be pushed up, and his class kept back till there is at least an approximate equality in the class. The names of the evils result-

ing from either course are legion. If the scholar is dropped down, he becomes discouraged ; ambition dies, and he becomes a fit candidate for the reception of every evil that idleness brings in its train. On the other hand, if the pushing process is adopted on his part, there will be superficial, half-conned lessons, and on the part of the half waiting class every temptation to idleness or an excuse for absenteeism. We will not enumerate all the evils consequent upon irregular attendance at school. It wastes money, kills time, destroys respect for habits of industry and punctuality, and blights, in a greater or less degree, the fair name and morals of the child who falls a victim to this easily besetting sin. Parents, help and encourage your children to renew their care and diligence in this particular.

We have spoken thus far as though parents and children were alone accountable for the absenteeism darkening almost every line of the register. But we pause not here. There is a third person, who holds a prominent position in the work—the Teacher. It is the duty of the teacher to make the school room a lively and interesting workshop, where every one finds something to do ; to so lay out and intersperse the different lessons and exercises of the day, that all shall be reached and interested. The manner of presentation and explanation, often have a chilling or an interest-begetting effect upon the pupils. And no teacher can accomplish all this successfully, without first looking over the lessons of the following day ; then bring to his or her aid topics, illustrations, or explanations from any source which will throw light upon the subject under consideration.—Again, the manner of the teacher whilst conducting a recitation has a decided effect. Is she cold and soulless—apparently hav-

ing no interest, only to get through the lesson in a given time? Rest assured she will have a dull and indifferent recitation. On the other hand, if she is well prepared in the lesson, and comes to the recitation with a mind thoroughly stored with items of interest, to throw attractions around the dry text of the book, there will be an incentive for the pupil—a desire to drink deeper of the “pierain spring,” that he, too, may know from whence all this light emanates. It has been our fortune (or misfortune) to see the same class under the direction of these differently constituted and prepared teachers. Had we not known the class, we could hardly have been persuaded that the cheerful, eye-speaking, interested class of that day was the same that, four months previous, we had seen sent to their seats, because of a want of preparation, and consequent lack of interest in the recitation. Teachers, you are a prominent party in making up a full or meagre attendance. A short time since we felt it our duty to ask one of the parents why he did not continue his son in school. His answer was that the boy had lost his interest in the school, and he might as well stay at home as to go. We have no doubt that in this instance the father, son and teacher were co-workers in the result,—not that either desired it, or purposely added to the common stock in trade. First, the teacher failed to infuse that interest into the school room that would attract and interest. Thereby the boy failed to improve the time and advantages that were spread out before him, and the father failed, in yielding too readily to the solicitations of the immature judgment of the boy.

There is another point to which we wish to call the attention of our teachers: thoroughness in whatever you attempt to do, whether in recitation or discipline. It is not enough that

your scholar can repeat a given rule, and with the arithmetic before him can solve all the problems under that rule. You must give him practical tests. See to it that he knows when, how and where the different principles apply in the work before him. Perhaps some may plead want of time for thorough and practical work. As far as our observation extends, the less practical and thorough, the less time the teacher has for practical drill. To illustrate: A teacher calls out a class to spell.—The lesson is poorly prepared. She pronounces a word. The scholar is not certain how it should be spelled. He thinks it over, spells and makes a failure. If the teacher gives him a second chance, as most are inclined to unless positively forbidden by the committee, it usually takes much longer to make the second guess than it did the first; so we have more than twice the time spent in guessing than it would have taken had the lesson been properly prepared. The same is true of all the lessons. This halting, hesitating course takes far more time than the real work. See to it, then, all who have not abandoned for themselves and pupils this uncertain or half-way work, that it be dropped at once. Then you will find much more time for the practical and interesting. We say interesting, because one of the most enviable positions a man can be placed in, is to be allowed, at the end of a term, to examine a school which has been under his direction; to see everything in its place; to see that harmony of feeling, that soul of action, that inexpressible feeling of willingness on the part of teacher and scholars to be tried in any or all the work of the term, knowing they shall not be found wanting. On the other hand, our pen would fail in giving a true analysis of the mingled feelings of regret, shame and confusion filling minds of teacher, pupils and committee, in the closing hours of an unprofitable school.

In conclusion we will refer to the general condition of our schools. While they are not all we could desire in any particular, still in most things which go to make up a good school, we think real progress has attended the efforts of committee and teachers. With the one exception of irregular attendance, we see improvement in every direction. Our teachers are more systematic in all their exercises; impressing the scholar with the idea that there is a time and place for everything, and a way and manner of doing things properly. As a result, we see more of order and comeliness in the school room, better discipline, both in the school and on the playgrounds around the houses. We also see an improvement in the thoroughness of recitation emanating from systematic and practical teaching. In the village our schools are so graded and systematized, that it requires a less extensive field of thought preparation for the teacher to come before his class with thoughts that stir and words that burn, than it would in a mixed school. He has to adapt his efforts at mind elevating and science searching only, as it were, to one class out of four. His study is their needs;—what will inspire ambition in their minds, to understand thoroughly the mysteries contained in the studies before them. Therefore we have a right to expect more marked improvement in these favored schools than in others. And we think, as a general thing, teachers both in and out of the village, have tried to make the most possible with the facilities at hand. We find one notable exception in most of our teachers. Appearances indicate that teachers, as a general thing, ignore the idea that they are to look after the cleanliness of the school room and its surroundings. We would simply say, if we have engaged any teacher or teachers for the coming term, whose sense of duty and propriety will not lead

them to look after the cleanliness and decent appearance of any and all buildings used by their scholars, they would confer a favor by handing in their resignation at once. We have suggested to our teachers that their care and supervision was as extensive as the play grounds and outbuildings attached to their school houses. We now say to you, one and all: we place the responsibility for the good and wholesome appearance of all things connected with the school in your hands. We shall read your respect for order and neatness, or your lack of the same, in the general appearance of your surroundings.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR ADMISSION TO THE HIGH SCHOOL.

Candidates must have a thorough knowledge of United States History, Common School Arithmetic, Common School Geography, Introductory Grammar, and the Higher Grammar, as far as Syntax. They must also be able to pass a satisfactory examination in Reading and Spelling.

COURSE OF STUDY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL.

FOURTH CLASS.

<i>1st Term.</i>	<i>2nd Term.</i>	<i>3d Term.</i>
Arithmetic,	Arithmetic finished,	Algebra begun,
Grammar,	Grammar finished,	Composition,
U. S. History.	U. S. History finished.	Phys'l Geogra- phy begun.

THIRD CLASS.

<i>1st Term.</i>	<i>2nd Term.</i>	<i>3d Term.</i>
Algebra,	Algebra finished,	Book-keeping,
Philosophy begun,	Philosophy finished,	Chemistry begun,
Phys'l Geography finished.	Physiology begun.	Physiology fin- ished.

SECOND CLASS.

<i>1st Term.</i>	<i>2nd Term.</i>	<i>3d Term.</i>
Geometry begun,	Geometry,	Geometry finished.
Chemistry finished,	Astronomy begun,	Astronomy,
Latin begun.	Latin.	Latin.

FIRST CLASS.

<i>1st Term.</i>	<i>2nd Term.</i>	<i>3d Term.</i>
French or Survey- ing,	French or Survey- ing,	French or Survey- ing,
Rhetoric, begun,	Rhetoric and Constitutional Law,	
Constitutional Law.	Latin.	Latin.

Reading, Writing, Spelling, Declamations, and Calisthenics taken up during the course.

Scholars not intending to graduate can take a partial course under the direction of the School Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

S. W. SQUIRE,	} <i>Committee.</i>
GEO. W. WIGGIN,	
Wm. B. NOLEN,	

STATISTICAL TABLE OF THE SCHOOLS IN FRANKLIN FOR THE FIRST TERM OF THE YEAR 1874-75.

SCHOOLS.	TEACHERS' NAMES.				Wages per Month.	Length of School in Weeks
	Whole No. Scholars.	Scholars over 15 years.	Scholars under 5 yrs.	Scholars between 5 and 15 years.		
High,	44	31	—	13	\$80.00	13
Grammar,	24	—	—	24	45.00	13
Sub Grammar,	40	—	—	40	40.00	12
Intermediate	46	—	—	46	40.00	12
No. 1, Primary,	66	—	—	66	40.00	12
No. 2, Primary,	55	—	—	55	40.00	12
No. 4,	32	—	—	32	40.00	11 ⁹ / ₁₀
No. 6,	49	—	—	49	40.00	11 ¹⁰ / ₁₀
No. 7,	25	—	—	25	32.00	11
No. 8,	65	—	1	64	32.00	11 ² / ₁₀
No. 9,	42	—	2	40	40.00	12
No. 10,	21	—	—	21	28.00	12
					32.00	12
					30.00	12

